The Infinite Price of Our Redemption and the Tremendous Mystery of the Cross

There are words that, because we have repeated them so many times, run the risk of no longer shaking us.

“Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died, and was buried.”

We pronounce them in every Creed. We hear them from childhood. We know them by heart.

But if we truly understood what they contain… we would fall to our knees.

Because here we are not simply facing a doctrinal phrase: we are standing before the very center of human history. Here is concentrated the drama of sin, divine justice, the infinite love of God, the defeat of Satan, and the rescue of man.

The fourth article of the Creed is not a secondary detail of our faith. It is the bleeding heart of Christianity.

Without the Passion, there is no redemption.
Without the Cross, there is no salvation.
Without the Blood of the Lamb, there is no hope.

I. “Suffered”: a small word for an ocean of pain

The catechism teaches that the word “suffered” expresses all the pains that Jesus Christ endured in His Passion.

And here we must pause deeply.

It does not simply say that He “died.” It first says that He “suffered.”

Because Christ did not come merely to die, but to suffer voluntarily out of love.

From Gethsemane to Calvary, Our Lord embraced a chain of physical, moral, spiritual, and mystical sufferings impossible to fully measure:

1. Physical suffering

- The agony in the Garden, to the point of sweating blood.
- The brutal scourging at the pillar.
- The crowning with thorns.
- The blows, slaps, and spit.
- The weight of the Cross.
- The crucifixion with nails.
- The progressive suffocation.
- The final piercing of the lance.

2. Moral suffering

- The betrayal of Judas.
- The abandonment by many disciples.
- Peter’s denial.
- The mockery of the crowd.
- Pilate’s cowardice.
- Public humiliation.

3. Spiritual suffering

Christ, mysteriously carrying the sins of the world, willed to experience the weight of the separation caused by sin:
“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Not because the Father truly abandoned the Son in His divinity, but because Christ willed to drink to the very dregs the chalice of human suffering.

II. Did God die?

Here we enter one of the most sublime mysteries of Catholic theology.

Jesus Christ died according to His humanity, not according to His divinity.

The divine nature is impassible and immortal. God cannot cease to be.

But Jesus Christ is one divine Person with two natures:

- True God
- True man

His body truly died. His human soul was separated from His body. But His divinity remained united to both.

This point is fundamental.

It was not merely a good man who died.
It was not a prophet.
It was not just any martyr.

The Incarnate Word died in His human nature.

That is why every drop of Blood has infinite value.

III. Pontius Pilate: the eternal symbol of human respect and political cowardice

The Creed mentions Pontius Pilate by name. This is not accidental.

Pilate represents all those who recognize the truth, yet submit to the pressure of the world.

He knew Christ was innocent. He declared it publicly. He tried to wash his hands.

But he yielded.

Here is an intensely relevant lesson.

How many today know what is true, but remain silent out of fear?
How many prefer pleasing the crowd rather than defending Christ?
How many, to preserve power, prestige, or social acceptance, condemn Him once more?

Pilate was not merely a historical figure.

Pilate lives again every time truth is sacrificed for convenience.

IV. The Cross: the cruelest and most glorious punishment

Roman crucifixion was the most brutal and humiliating punishment.

It sought not only to kill, but to degrade.

It was a death:

- Public
- Slow
- Painful
- Shameful

And precisely this did Christ choose.

Why?

Because He willed to descend into the deepest abyss of our misery in order to redeem it all.

The Cross, an instrument of torture, became a throne.
Shame became glory.
Apparent defeat became eternal victory.

That is why the Catholic does not see the Cross as a mere decorative symbol. He sees it as the altar where his ransom was paid.

V. Could Jesus have freed Himself?

Yes. Absolutely.

With a single word He could have struck down His enemies.

He already showed this in Gethsemane when He said “I am He,” and they fell to the ground.

Christ was not a powerless victim. He was Priest and voluntary Victim.

No one took His life from Him. He gave it.

Here true love shines:
Not loving when no other option remains…

But choosing sacrifice when one could avoid it.

VI. Why did He have to be both God and man?

This question touches the core of redemption.

Sin offends God, whose majesty is infinite.
Therefore, reparation had to possess infinite value.

But man had sinned, so man had to pay.

The problem:
Finite man cannot offer infinite satisfaction.

The divine solution:
The Son of God becomes man.

As man, He can suffer.
As God, His suffering has infinite merit.

Only Jesus Christ could bridge the gap.

No angel was enough.
Not all humanity together.
Not centuries of penance.

Only the God-Man.

VII. Was so much suffering necessary?

Theologically, no.

The smallest act of Christ had infinite value.

A single tear would have sufficed.

Then why so much pain?

Because He willed:

1. To show the horrifying gravity of sin

If sin were a small matter, would such a price have been necessary?

2. To manifest God’s immeasurable love

The Cross forever answers anyone who doubts divine love.

3. To move our hearts to conversion

Every wound cries out:
“This is how I love you.”
“This is how grave sin is.”
“Do not crucify Me again.”

VIII. The Seven Words from the Cross: an eternal testament

From the wood of the Cross, Christ:

- Forgives His executioners.
- Promises Paradise to the good thief.
- Gives us Mary as Mother.
- Expresses His thirst.
- Declares fulfillment.
- Surrenders His spirit.

At Calvary our spiritual motherhood is also born:
“Behold your Mother.”

Mary is not a sentimental accessory. She is the gift of the Crucified Christ.

IX. The prodigies at His death: creation trembles

When Christ dies:

- The sun is darkened.
- The earth quakes.

- The temple veil is torn.
- Tombs are opened.

Nature responds because its Creator is being immolated.

The torn veil announces something immense:
Access to God is opened by the Blood of the Lamb.

X. He was buried: the total reality of His death

Christ was truly buried.

He did not merely appear to die.
He did not simply faint.
He was not a symbol.

He truly died.

The new tomb confirms the historical reality of His death… and prepares the incomparable glory of the Resurrection.

XI. He died for all… but not all are saved

Here Catholic theology is clear:

Christ died for all without exception.
His sacrifice is sufficient for all.
But not all accept its fruits.

Salvation is not imposed.

Many reject:

- Faith
- Conversion
- The sacraments
- Obedience

The Cross opens the door.

But each soul must enter.

XII. The sacraments: the living application of the Passion

The Church teaches something essential: it is not enough merely to know that Christ died.

The merits of His Passion must be personally applied.

How?
Primarily through the sacraments:

- Baptism
- Confession
- Eucharist
- etc.

The sacraments are not empty rituals; they are channels of the Blood of Christ.

To despise them is to reject the remedy.

XIII. The great modern tragedy: wanting Christ without the Cross

Today many want an inspiring Jesus, but not a crucified one.
A therapeutic Jesus, but not a Redeemer.
A tolerant Jesus, but not a Savior.

But the Creed does not say:
“He was admired, applauded, and understood.”

It says:
“He suffered… was crucified…”

Christianity without the Cross does not save.
Faith without sacrifice is emptied.
Religion without expiation becomes sentimentalism.

XIV. What does this article demand of us?

1. Horror of sin

Every mortal sin cries out “Crucify Him.”

2. Infinite gratitude

We were not purchased with gold, but with Blood.

3. Union with our own sufferings

When we suffer united to Christ, the Cross becomes a path of sanctification.

4. Fidelity

It is not enough to be moved before the Crucified. We must follow Him.

Conclusion: Gaze upon the Cross until you understand who you are

The fourth article of the Creed teaches us two inseparable truths:

The horror of sin

and

The immensity of divine love

Look at the Cross and you will understand how much sin costs.
Look at the Cross and you will understand how much you are worth to God.

You are not an accident.
You are not a statistic.
You are not refuse.

You are a soul for whom Christ accepted:

- the scourge,
- the thorns,
- the nails,
- the thirst,
- the lance,
- the tomb.

Every Good Friday, the whole universe seems to whisper:

“It was not the iron that held Christ to the Cross… it was love.”

And now the great question is not only:
“What did Christ suffer?”

But:
“What will I do with that sacrifice?”

Because before the Cross no one remains neutral.
Either you embrace it…
Or you despise it.

And upon that answer depends eternity.